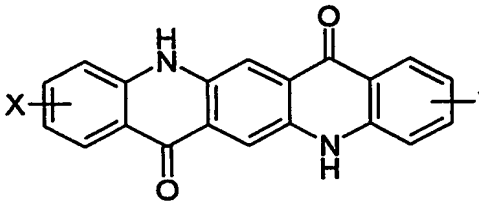
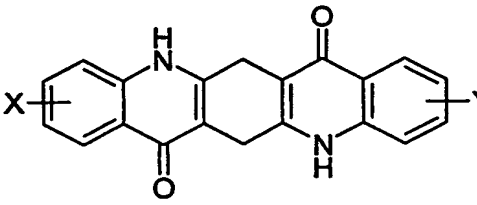
Claims:

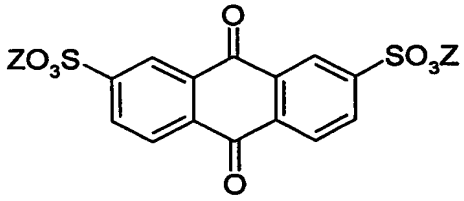
1. A process for preparing a quinacridone of formula



(I), which comprises oxidizing a salt of a 6,13-dihydroquinacridone of formula



(II) with hydrogen peroxide in the presence of a catalyst according to formula



(III), wherein X and Y are independently of one another selected from the group consisting of H, F, Cl, C_1-C_3alkyl and C_1-C_3alkoxy, and each Z is independently of the other H, Na or K.

2. A process of claim 1, wherein the 6,13-dihydroquinacridone salt is an alkali metal salt, preferably a mono- or disodium or a mono- or dipotassium salt or a mixture thereof, most preferred a di-sodium or di-potassium salt.

3. A process of claim 1, wherein the oxidation step is carried out by combining a slurry consisting essentially of the 6,13-dihydroquinacridone salt, the catalyst, a base and a liquid phase, with an aqueous solution of hydrogen peroxide.

4. A process of claim 3, wherein the liquid phase consists essentially of from 20 to 750 parts by weight of water and from 50 to 750 parts by weight of a lower alcohol, preferably from 40 to 600 parts by weight of water and from 100 to 600 parts by weight of the alcohol, per 100 parts by weight of 6,13-dihydroquinacridone.

5. A process of claim 4, wherein the alcohol is a C_1 to C_3 alcohol, preferably methanol.

6. A process of claim 3, wherein the base is an alkali metal hydroxide which is present in an amount of from 1 to 7 moles, preferably from 2.2 to 5 moles, per mole of the 6,13-dihydroquinacridone.

7. A process of claim 6, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is sodium or potassium hydroxide, or a mixture thereof.

8. A process of claim 1, wherein the 2,7-anthraquinone-di-sulfonic acid catalyst is an alkali metal salt, preferably the mono or di-sodium or mono or di-potassium salt or a mixture thereof.

9. A process of any claim 1 to 8, wherein the catalyst is present in an amount of from 0.005 to 0.1 times the weight of the 6,13-dihydroquinacridone.

10. A process of any claim 1 to 9, wherein a from 1 to 50%, preferably from 5 to 30% by weight aqueous solution of hydrogen peroxide is used.

11. A process of any claim 1 to 10, wherein from 1.1 to 5 moles of hydrogen peroxide per mole of 6,13-dihydroquinacridone are used.

12. A process of claim 3, wherein the aqueous solution of hydrogen peroxide is added to the slurry over an interval of from 5 minutes to 6 hours at a temperature of 30°C or more and the reaction medium is subsequently maintained, with stirring, at a temperature of 30°C or more, preferably from 50°C to reflux temperature, for an interval of from 5 minutes to 5 hours, preferably from 5 minutes to 30 minutes, to complete the oxidation and promote pigment recrystallization.

13. A process of any claim 1 to 12, wherein the oxidation step is carried out in the presence of from 0.05 to 8% by weight, based on the 6,13-dihydroquinacridone, of a particle growth inhibitor preferably selected from the group consisting of phthalimido-methyl-, imidazolylmethyl- and pyrazolylmethyl-quinacridone; phthalimidomethyl- and o-benzosulfimidomethyl-6,13-dihydroquinacridone; and quinacridone

monosulfonic acid and 1,4-diketo-3,6-diarylpyrrolo[3,4-c]pyrrole sulfonic acid and their salts.

14. A process of any claim 1 to 13, wherein the quinacridone pigment is quinacridone, 2,9-dichloroquinacridone, 2,9-difluoroquinacridone, 4,11-dichloroquinacridone, 4,11-difluoroquinacridone, 2,9-dimethylqinacridone, 2,9-dimethoxyquinacridone or a quinacridone pigment solid solution preferably selected from the group consisting of quinacridone/2,9-dichloroquinacridone, quinacridone/4,11-dichloroquinacridone, quinacridone/2,9-dimethylquinacridone, quinacridone/2,9-dimethoxyquinacridone, 2,9-dichloroquinacridone/2,9-dimethylquinacridone, 2,9-dichloroquinacridone/2,9-dimethoxyquinacridone and 2,9-dimethylquinacridone/2,9-dimethoxyquinacridone solid solutions.

15. A process of claim 14, wherein the quinacridone pigment is the alpha, beta or gamma (in particular gamma-I, gamma-II or gamma-III) form of unsubstituted quinacridone.

16. A process of any claim 1 to 15, wherein at least 96% by weight of the dihydroquinacridone is converted to the corresponding quinacridone.